3. Computerization and Information Technology.

4. Celebration of Fairs and Festivals.

The Plan Budget for 2007-08 is Rs. 953 crore. Rs. 323 crore has been released to the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations in the current Five Year Plan for upgradation of infrastructure at tourist destinations/circuits.

Implementation and monitoring of the projects is the responsibility of the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. However, the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India monitors the progress of implementation and utilization of released central assistance from time to time.

Development of tourism in Sikkim

844. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has chalked out any plan for promotion and development of tourism in the North-Eastern Region (NER) particularly in Sikkim;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) Ministry of Tourism, Government of India provides Central Financial Assistance to North Eastern States for development of infrastructure, Information Technology, Large Revenue Generating Projects and for organizing fairs/festivals/events. During the Tenth Five Year Plan, Ministry of Tourism sanctioned tourism projects for Rs. 392.33 crore to all States in the North Eastern Region including Rs. 74.96 crore for Sikkim. During 2007-08, Rs. 119.00 crore has already been sanctioned for tourism projects in North-Eastern States including Rs. 54.83 crore for Sikkim.

The Ministry of Tourism promotes tourism to North East by launching dedicated media campaigns, website and production of publicity and collateral material. Information on North Eastern Region is disseminated through the Indiatourism offices in India and abroad.

Development of tourism in the country

845. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Parliamentary Committee has asked Government to adopt "aggressive" marketing and publicity strategies and develop the country as a world class tourist destination for successfully competing with other Asian Nations like China and Singapore;

(b) whether Committee has given number of suggestions for developing competitive destinations that match international standards in terms of price, quality and level of satisfaction;

(c) whether Government has accepted the recommendations;

(d) what are the concrete steps and measures Government proposes to take; and

(e) whether Government has agreed to provide more outlay for development of tourism in the country during 2007-08?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir.

(d) A series of promotional activities have been undertaken by the Ministry of Tourism, through its overseas offices, for increasing the visibility of Indian tourism products and to